

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 00632 160525Z

12

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OS-01 SCCT-01 SY-04 AID-05 CU-02

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R 151728Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2344

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PASS AID/W

SUBJECT: OCCUPATION TWO AUB BUILDINGS BY NON-AUB ELEMENTS

1. AROUND 7:00 A.M. JANUARY 14, FOURTEEN YOUTHS OCCUPIED AMERICAN UNIVERSITY'S FISK AND JESSUP HALLS. OCCUPIERS, WHO WORE SKI MASK COVERINGS OVER THEIR FACES, GAINED ENTRANCE TO BUILDINGS BY OVERPOWERING JANITORS AS LATTER WERE OPENING BUILDINGS FOR CLASSES. OF THE 14 YOUTHS INVOLVED, 10 WERE AMONG THE 103 STUDENTS EXPELLED FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE SPRING 1974 STRIKE, ONE WAS STUDENT AT BEIRUT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AND THREE ARE NOT AS YET IDENTIFIABLE. MAIN PURPOSE OF OCCUPATION APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN TO PERSUADE UNIVERSITY READMIT 103 STUDENTS EXPELLED AFTER 1974 STRIKE.

2. UPON LEARNING OF OCCUPATION, PRESIDENT KIRKWOOD IMMEDIATELY REQUESTED LEBANESE AUTHORITIES TO SEND POLICE TO CLEAR BUILDINGS. AFTERNOON JANUARY 14, HE MET WITH PRIME MINISTER SOLH WHO ALSO MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND WHO SAID HE WOULD CONSIDER POSSIBILITY SENDING TROOPS TO EVACUATE BUILDINGS. PRESUMABLY AS RESULT SUCH CONSIDERATION, GOVERNMENT DISPATCHED 40-MAN SECURITY CONTINGENT TO UNIVERSITY JANUARY 15, AT 4:00 AM, CLEARED BUILDINGS AND ARRESTED OCCUPIERS. EVICTION AND ARRESTS APPARENTLY ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT VIOLENCE.

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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 00632 160525Z

AT SAME TIME SECURITY CONTINGENT ALSO CLEARED ADJOINING

INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE BUILDING WHICH HAD BEEN SIMILARLY OCCUPIED.

3. DURING OCCUPATION JAN. 14 AUB STUDENTS CONTINUED CLASSES AS NORMAL AND THERE WAS LITTLE EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT FOR OCCUPIERS. TODAY, JANUARY 15, CAMPUS APPEARS COMPLETELY BACK TO NORMAL.

4. THIS MORNING, JANUARY 15, AMBASSADOR, ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT KIRKWOOD, SENT LETTER OF APPRECIATION TO PRIME MINISTER SOLH FOR GOVERNMENT'S PROMPT AND EFFECTIVE ACTION.

5. COMMENT: WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY PROMPT, EFFECTIVE AND SKILLFUL MEASURES TAKEN BY LEBANESE GOVERNMENT IN HANDLING OCCUPATION. NO LEBANESE GOVERNMENT IN RECENT YEARS HAS RESPONDED SO QUICKLY TO AUB REQUESTS IN SIMILAR SITUATIONS. FIRM GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF AUB IN THIS INSTANCE SHOULD HAVE DAMPENING AFFECT ON STUDENTS OR OUTSIDERS SEEKING CREATE PROBLEMS ON AUB CAMPUS.

GODLEY

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